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# Visualizing the Queer: Historical Sociology and Visual Representations

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## Abstract

### **“Men Only”: Visual Representations of Urban Queer Culture**

*Justin Bengry*

*Men Only* was among the earliest men’s lifestyle magazines published in Britain. From its first issue, in December 1935, the magazine cultivated a mainstream audience of middle-class, presumably heterosexual male consumers. But at the same time, it visually referenced queer subcultural codes, practices, and homoerotically charged situation. Through its cartoons, photos and textual content, *Men Only* courted a homosexual market segment a full half century before advertisers and marketers would openly acknowledge and seek the Pink Pound.

### **‘Danger - Deep Water’: Parson’s Pleasure and the Aesthetics of Homosocial Bathing Culture**

*George Townsend*

This paper will explore the author’s research into the outdoor nude bathing place known as Parson’s Pleasure, located just outside Oxford in southern England. Parson’s Pleasure was open as a business between 1845 and 1992, and in that time catered only to men and boys, many of whom were students, teachers indeed clergymen associated with Oxford University. The place will be examined as the subject of a variety of visual materials including signage, maps, newspapers, prints, paintings and photographs, but also as a site that facilitated a certain lifestyle that itself had a visual emphasis: be it through body-perfecting pursuits such as swimming and sunbathing, through the emulation of aesthetic discourses such as the pastoral, or through the play of voyeurism and exhibitionism central to the site’s use as a social space and cruising ground.

### **Documenting Queerness: Representing Politics and Desire**

*Molly Merryman*

Queer theory positions LGBTQ desire in a manner that is deconstructionist and fluid-and

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which runs counter to positivist and pragmatic sociological analyses of sexuality. Riffing from John Grady's term *Doing Sociology Visually*, this presentation will use examples from my documentary work to demonstrate how documentary methodologies can be used to investigate and reveal queer subculture, politics and desire while being both true to empirical ethnography and queer subjectivities.